

SEGREGATION

Vol. 108

SLAVERY ATTITUDES

71.2009 085.04702



Slavery

Attitudes about Slavery

Segregation

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

CALL LINCOLN CONFERENCE

New Movement in Behalf of Colored Race.

NEW YORK, Feb. 12.—Signatures of many prominent men and women are attached to a call issued today for a national "Lincoln conference on the negro question." The object of the conference as outlined in the calls, is a full discussion of present evils and to awaken a renewed interest and activity in behalf of the colored race and to secure for it perfect equality. The question is put in the call: "How far has the nation lived up to the obligation imposed upon it by the emancipation proclamation?" It deprecates the 'spread of lawless attacks upon the negro, north, south and west,' and says: "Silence, under these conditions means tacit approval."

Miss Jane Addams of Chicago heads the signers.

1909

IN BEHALF OF NEGROES.

**"National Lincoln Conference" on
Race Question is Called by
Prominent People.**

NEW YORK, Feb. 12.—Signatures of many prominent men and women are attached to a call issued today for a national "Lincoln conference on the negro question."

The object of the conference as outlined in the call, is a full discussion of present evils and to awaken a renewed interest and activity in behalf of the colored race, and to secure for it perfect equality.

The question is put in the call: "How far has the nation lived up to the obligation imposed upon it by the emancipation proclamation?" It deprecates "the spread of lawless attacks upon the negro, north, south and west," and says: "Silence, under these conditions, means tacit approval."

Storm Clouds in Tension Rising on Anti-Bias

Dixie

Chicago American
Feb 12, 1956

THE Supreme Court decision outlawing racial segregation in the public schools landed on the Deep South like an atomic bomb.

Not since Mr. Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation had the pillars of the South's social structure been so affronted.

A Hearst Newspapers survey shows that today, 21 months after the nine judges made their solemn pronouncement, the situation below the Mason-Dixon line is, by and large, one of defiance and evasion.

Seventeen States had mandatory school segregation at the time of the court's decision on May 17, 1954. In many of those, historic changes are being made to comply with the ruling. But in the heart of the Old South the question is perhaps more explosive than ever.

Segregationists inflamed by the school decision have been additionally aggravated by later rulings against racial restrictions in public parks and in interstate travel.

Tied to Population

Reaction to integration orders has been tied tightly to integration factors. Most fervent segregation sentiment has been expressed in rural areas of the South where the Negro population is greatest.

The Negro is moving to the North or to the cities. And in Southern cities, such as Atlanta, the Negro is gaining some local political power as whites increasingly drift to the suburbs.

Atlanta, for instance, integrated its golf courses last December on orders of the Supreme Court. But the Legislature, appalled, immediately threatened to revoke the city's charter and that of other municipalities permitting integration of such facilities.

The pro-segregation states, in their reaction to the high court decree, have moved along separate but similar lines. The private school plan is one course.

That entails abandonment of public schools, with the state financing the student at a private, segregated school. South Carolina and Georgia have laid the groundwork for such plans, while Virginia is working one. In each case, approval was obtained in referendums.

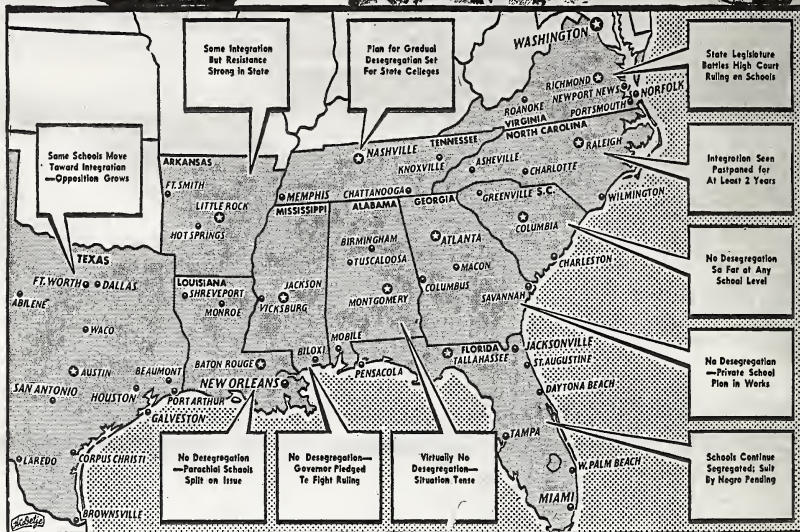
Considered Void

Some agreement also has come among pro-segregation states on the doctrine of interposition. That theory holds that a sovereign state can, in effect, consider a federal action void until all other sovereign States decide on its legality.

However, there is little agreement yet on how far "interposition" should go toward the old doctrine of "nullification."

Outside the established governments, about 60 "citizens" organizations have sprung up to fight desegregation. An attempt is being made by John Barr, a New Orleans industrialist, to weld some of those into one politically-powerful organization.

The segregation issue cannot be di-



forced from politics. Its political effects will be felt this presidential election year in such states as Virginia, South Carolina, Louisiana and Florida, where there was a strong Eisenhower vote in 1952.

Election Peril

Some congressional leaders are threatened, too. Prime examples are Sen. George (D-Ga.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Rep. Vinson (D-Ga.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Their election opponents will charge that Congress has done nothing to circum-

vent the high court ruling.

Racial violence has been increasing in the South. And while all instances cannot be tied directly to the segregation issue, some must stem from tensions aroused by the controversy.

Directly connected with segregation issues were the bombing of homes of two Negro leaders in Montgomery, Ala., where Negroes have been boycotting "Jim Crow" city buses.

Veteran reporters' attitudes on race questions are hardening. They feel the situation is building to an explosive climax, the consequences of which none will guess.

THE CHARLES F. HEARTMAN COLLECTION

Of Material Relating to Negro Culture

Printed and in Manuscript

Route Three ;: Hattiesburg, Mississippi

NEWS SHEET NUMBER TWO

FEBRUARY, 1945

THE THOMAS PETERSON-MUNDY GOLD MEDAL

The 30th of March, 1870, was a red letter day in the life of the colored race. On this day the United States State Department sent over the wires a proclamation declaring the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The following morning newspapers spread the fact before the public.

The City of Perth Amboy in New Jersey had appointed the 31st of March as a day of special election for the ratification or rejection of a city charter. Thomas Peterson, a Negro, who was in the service of the Mundy family and therefore better known by the latter name, read about the proclamation and decided to vote. Mr. J. L. Kearny, a city officer, advised Peterson to exercise the right, which was duly done, the ballot being received by Mr. Patrick Convery, who was the officer at the polls.

An affair like this did not go much beyond the locality in which it occurred. However, Mr. Peterson's bragging—if it can be called such—of having been the first Negro voter in the United States under the Fifteenth Amendment travelled some twenty miles and reached Princeton. Here another Negro who cast a vote on April 4th, 1870, claimed the laurels and received a medal. And thus a neat feud developed. Some of this can be read about in the local newspapers of the time—other proof is buried in the city archives. Claims and counter-claims were carefully investigated, and finally those who had bestowed the medal upon Moses Schenck found a loophole through which they could retire in a dignified manner, by declaring that he was the first voter in Princeton under the new amendment. The equilibrium was restored, and the citizens of Perth Amboy got busy, not only to celebrate the event, but to honor the man who really was the first Negro voter in the United States under the Fifteenth amendment.

Thomas Peterson-Mundy was born in Metuchen, New Jersey, in the year 1824. His parents moved in 1828 to Perth Amboy, where his father died. In 1885 his mother was still living. She was born before 1800. Peterson-Mundy married a girl who had served an apprenticeship under the gradual Emancipation Laws, by which slavery was abolished in New Jersey. Peterson-Mundy was a man well known in Perth Amboy and Middlesex County. He was universally respected. Like many of his race, he was a jack-of-all-trades, but,

it was said, inferior in none. As years went by, he became almost an institution. That he was an intelligent person may be judged from the fact that in 1870, the same year in which his race was enfranchised, he was, without opposition, chosen as one of a number to revise the Charter, for the adoption of which he had cast his first vote. He was sent several times as a delegate to Republican Conventions, and was summoned to serve as a juror in the County Court. He was appointed Superintendent of the Public School buildings by an unanimous vote. This was quite an honor, because the appointing power was in the hands of the Democrats, certainly a proof of the estimation in which he was held.

It was on Decoration Day, May 30, 1884, that the medal was bestowed upon him, at an affair which will forever remain a high spot in the local affairs of the city of Perth Amboy, but which also should be a memorable event in North American Negro history. The committee chosen consisted of the most important citizens of Perth Amboy, some of whom had a national reputation. The members of the committee belonged to both parties. The Honorable William Paterson had been selected for the presentation speech. No better person could have been appointed. The Judge, who also was a historian and a great orator, was at his best. Flowery as his speech was, it was an analytical masterpiece. His references to the contra claim and its dismissal must have caused many a chuckle in the audience, and not the least in Princeton. That Decoration Day was the one chosen for the presentation, he explains with timely words: "What time could be selected as more appropriate than that in which the surviving comrades of those who sleep where all of them must sleep, gathered throughout the land to lay flowers of affection on the graves of their companions, and drop a silent tear to their memory. The right conferred, of which the medal is emblematic, was an incident of the sacrifices made to secure the perpetuity of this Union of States and People."

A little later he continued: "To the partakers of the privilege now commemorated in the person of the one whose fortune it was to exercise the right for the first time, I would recommend the recollection of the sacrifices and services by which the boon was conferred upon them. As Minerva sprang full-armed from the brain of Jove, so they have passed to the full stature of American citizens without the preparatory training

of indentures or apprenticeship. I stop here to urge upon their attention the single consideration that a higher principle is involved in this gift than the mere manual capacity of depositing a folded slip of paper containing a few printed or written names in a rectangular box. New privileges impose new responsibilities. No class or clan has interfered with the free and full exercise of the right thus newly acquired, and this action today is but an indication of the general spirit in which the posterity of the tribes who dwell 'where America's sunny fountains roll down the golden sand,' have been welcomed to the full brotherhood of man. That is the philanthropic phraseology, I believe, used by enthusiasts, and whatever it may mean exactly, seems to cover the ground. For new duties, new qualifications are necessary, and these must follow observation and experience and practice. New scholars must begin to learn, and all commence with A B C. The facilities for education are more and better now, and of a higher standard than when the right of suffrage was extended among the Caucasian race. There is no reason why these facilities should not be improved and a corresponding elevation in good attributes must ensue and a higher tone in every respect be given. None would seek to withhold these advantages for any reason now, and especially should they who have been made partakers of a new covenant and new blessings, become fitted for the performance of new trusts, and so be enabled, in the coming of time, to rise eventually to those grades of excellence and planes of merit that can be attained by a living faith and good works. A right of this high character may be abused, and that will be the danger in this case against which to guard, until time shall have conquered the force of prejudice and passion.

Do any ask, what of the man? Well, he is no myth, and is known as widely as any other from Sandy Point to Crane Creek, and from the Long Ferry to Spa Brook. It may be said with entire correctness that more people have lived with him, or been in his employment, at various times and in different pursuits, than with any other single person in the city. A stranger would be referred to him as a celebrity and an institution of Perth Amboy, an artistic artisan, not in one but in many departments, more fully expressed in a common phrase disguised in as classical Latin as designates legal or medical terms, a *Johannes Omnium Artium*. Thomas Peterson may be an unknown quantity comparatively, but I should smile at the ignorance of such in this community as would venture to say, that they had never heard of Tom Mundy. An American with as much propriety might profess ignorance of the existence of the hero of the hatchet story, or an alumnus of Princeton College of Johnny, or one of his own race that the soul of John Brown was moving on still. His name alone is his passport here in life, and crowned with electoral laurels, will be his eulogy in death.

And so we meet to decorate
By token on the Freedman's coat,
The man who was in any State
The first to cast a Freedman's vote."

And thus the presentation took place. On the obverse side of the medal is a profile of Abraham Lincoln; on

the reverse the following inscription:

"Presented By Citizens of
Perth Amboy, N. J.
To

Thomas Peterson
The First Colored Voter In
The United States Under
The Fifteenth Amendment,
At An Election Held In
That City, March 31st, 1870."

Little remains to be said. Peterson-Mundy sported a beard, and a portrait of him, wearing the medal, is known. In his old age, when he could not hold a full-time job, he was occasionally in want. Too proud to ask for anything, voluntary charitable administrations of his friends were apparently not sufficient, and it seems that on several occasions he had to pledge the medal for a small loan, to be redeemed at the earliest possible moment, until one day the greatest redeemer took hold of him, with the pledge unclaimed. It passed into the hands of the Hon. Harold E. Pickersgill, Recorder of the city of Perth Amboy for many years, an indefatigable collector of New Jerseyana. It was one of his prized possessions. This is not the place to discuss the Judge, but it may be hinted that not always could he show the medal to an inquiring visitor, because it also had to be redeemed. Some time after the Judge's death I was fortunate to acquire the medal, an important memorabilia in the collection, where also can be found the pamphlet describing the history and transactions of the presentation, as well as a pencil-portrait sketch of Thomas Peterson-Mundy.

Laws of the African Society. Instituted at Boston, Anno Domino, 1796. (Ornament) Boston: Printed for the Society, MDCCCXI. 19.5 cm. 7 pages.

The Rules of the African Society. 1st. We, the African Members, form ourselves into a Society, under the name of above, for the mutual benefit of each other, which may from time to time offer; behaving ourselves at the same time as true and faithful Citizens of the Commonwealth in which we live; and that we take no one into the Society, who shall commit any injustice or outrage against the laws of their country.

2d. That before any person can become a member of the Society, he must be presented by three of the members of the same; and the person, or persons, wishing to become members, must make application one month at least beforehand, and that at one of the monthly, or three monthly meetings. Person, or persons, if approved of shall be received into the Society. And, that before the admittance of any person into the Society, he shall be obliged to read the rules, or cause the same to be read to him; and not be admitted as a member unless he approves them.

3d. That each member on admittance, shall pay one quarter of a Dollar to the Treasurer; and be credited for the same, in the books of the Society; and his name to be added to the list of members.

4th. That each Member shall pay one quarter of one dollar per month to the Treasurer, and be credited for same on the book, but no benefit can be tendered to

any Member, until he has belonged to the Society for one year.

5th. That any Member, or Members, not able to attend the regular meetings of the Society, may pay their part by appointing one of their brothers to pay the same for him: So any travelling, at a distance by sea, or land, may, by appointing any person to pay their subscription, will be, though absent for any length of time, or on their return, will pay up the same, shall still be considered as brothers, and belonging to the Society.

6th. That no money shall be returned to any one that shall leave the Society; but if the Society should see fit to dismiss any one from their community, it shall then be put to the vote, whether the one, thus dismissed, shall have his money again, if he should have any left, when the expenses he may have been to the Society are deducted.

7th. That any Member, absenting himself from the Society, for the space of one year, shall be considered as separating himself from the same; but, if he should return at the end of that time, and pay up his subscription, he shall in six months be re-established in all the benefits of a Societian: But after that time he shall be considered as a new Member.

8th. That a committee, consisting of three, or five persons, shall be chosen by the members every three months; and that their chief care shall be, to attend to the sick, and see that they want nothing that the Society can give, and inform the Society, at their next meeting of those who stand in need of the assistance of the Society, and of what was done during the time of their commitment. The committee shall likewise be empowered to call the Society together as often as may be necessary.

9th. That all monies, paid into the Society, shall be credited to the payers; and all going out, shall be debited to whom, or what for; and a regular account kept by one, chosen by the Society for that purpose.

10th. When any Member, or Members of the Society is sick, and not able to supply themselves with necessities, suitable to their situations, the committee shall then tender to them and their family whatever the Society have, or may think fit for them. And should any Member die, and not leave wherewith to pay the expenses of his funeral, the Society shall then see that any, so situated, be decently buried. But it must be remembered, that any Member, bringing on himself any sickness, or disorder, by intemperance, shall not be considered, as entitled to any benefits, or assistance from the Society.

11th. Should any Member die, and leave a lawful widow and children, the Society shall consider themselves bound to relieve her necessities, so long as she behaves herself decently, and remain a widow; and that the Society do the best in their power to place the children so that they may in time be capable of getting an honest living.

12th. Should the Society, with the blessing of Heaven, acquire a sum, suitable to bear interest, they will then take into consideration the best method they can, of making it useful.

13th. The Members will watch over each other in their Spiritual concerns; and by advice, exhortations, any prayer excite each other to grow in Grace, and

in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and to live soberly, righteously and Godly, in this present world, that we may all be accepted of the Redeemer, and live together with him in Glory hereafter.

14th. That each Member travelling for any length of time, by Sea or Land, shall leave a Will with the Society, or being married, with his wife, all other Members to leave a will with the Society, for to enable them to recover their effects, if they should not return, but on their return, this Will is to be returned to the one that gave it, but if he should not return, and leave a lawful heir, the property is to be delivered to him; otherwise deemed to the Society.

The African Society have a Charity Lecture quarterly, on the second Tuesday in every third month.

A List of the Members names:

Plato Alderson	*Gloacster Haskins
*Hannible Allen	*Prince M. Harris
Thomas Burdine	Juber Howland
Peter Bailey	Richard Holsted
Joseph Ball	Thomas Jackson
*Peter Branch	George Jackson
Prince Brown	Lewis Jones
Easton Ballard	Isaac Johnson
Anthony Battis	John Johnson
Serico Collins	Sear Kimball
Rufus Callehorn	*Thomas Lewis
John Clark	Joseph Low
Scipio Dalton	George Middleton
Aurthur Davis	Derby Miller
John Decause	Cato Morey
Hamlet Earl	Richard Marshall
Ceazer Fayerweather	Joseph Ocraman
Mingo Freeman	*Joseph Phillips
Cato Gardner	Cato Rawson
Jeremiah Green	*Richard Standley
*James Hawkins	Cyrus Vassall
John Harrison	Derby Vassall

These with a Star are (not Negroes).

This interesting pamphlet came from Edward Eberstadt of New York City.

The pamphlet is not listed in Sabin, Work, Hubbard, and other possible bibliographical sources. It is not mentioned by Moore, Locke, and other research workers, which I have consulted, and while no deliberate search has been made, there is reason to believe that the pamphlet has not survived elsewhere. It is an interesting document because it relates to one of the earliest attempts of Negroes in the United States, to form a club. That such a society should be organized for a charitable purpose, is not surprising; yet one can assume that at meetings many other subjects, in particular the status of the Negro, were considered. Not the least important feature of the pamphlet is the list of Members, recording the names of intelligent Negroes one hundred and fifty years ago, at the same time disclosing the fact that white persons belonged to the society, perhaps one of the earliest recorded examples of Negroes and Whites working together for a purpose. Nor was it any fly-by-night affair, as the printing of the Laws after six years of existence certifies.

The Students' Repository. S. H. Smothers, Editor, James Buckner, Assistant Editor. The Students' Reposi-

tory is the organ of the Students and friends of Union Literary Institute. Published by S. H. Smothers, at Spartanburg, Randolph County, Indiana, 1863-1864.

Volume I contains 4 numbers; volume II consists of 2 numbers. No more was published. On the cover of the second number Dr. J. E. Beverly of Winchester, Ind., is added as publisher. With volume 2 S. H. Smothers and Samuel Peters became editors and Smothers name alone appears as publisher. The first 4 numbers were printed at The Journal Office, Winchester, Ind.; the last 2 numbers carry as printer: L. G. Dynes & Co., Union City, Ind.

I have not been able to trace another file or single number. My file carries on five numbers the autograph of a famous former owner: Charles Eliot Norton, who is represented by 2 contributions in the Magazine. Altogether 32 contributors can be counted. The last 2 numbers contain advertisements including one from the United States Treasury on the U. S. 7-30 Loan. Every number contains names of financial contributors. This list is impressive and covers many places in the United States. It seems that S. H. Smothers was really responsible for the periodical because the last number has laid in a broadside: Notice to Subscribers. In this notice Smothers announces that the publication has come to its end. He says, "I have volunteered in the Army of the United States. I feel that the time has come when the cause of our distracted and bleeding country, and the interests of my race, require me to ACT rather than talk or write. I am unable to make any arrangement to have the Repository continued in my absence.

Published during the Civil War at the outset of Negro enfranchisement by Negroes for Negroes, this is perhaps one of the earliest publications of the sort by which the black race in America began, through print, its long and systematic struggle for self-improvement and recognition as a political and social entity. Smothers, the editor, was the son and grandson of slaves. His grandfather, after escaping from Virginia to Ohio, secretly returned to aid his children in escaping but was discovered while hiding in the woods and was killed. S. H. Smothers became head of the Manual Training School established by the Northern Negroes near Richmond, Indiana, and was thus occupied when he established this magazine. Its contents include articles by Smothers and other leading negroes on education for the blacks, the training of efficient teachers, the dreadful conditions prevailing in the camps of "contraband negroes" in Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana, the Liberia colonization scheme, the War, the road to citizenship, the discriminatory school laws of the North, etc. Also printed are the "Minutes of the Third Annual Meeting of the Ohio Colored Teachers' Association," held in Columbus, O., Dec. 29, 30 and 31, 1863.

I will close this description of an interesting item in my collection with a quotation from the introductory article. Writes Smothers: "If we, as a race, ever become educated, elevated and respected, we have to do the work ourselves." Well expressed prophecy.

An Abridgement of the Laws in Force and Use in Her Majesty's Plantations: (viz.) of Virginia, Jamaica, Barbadoes, Maryland, New-England, New-York, Carolina, etc. Digested under proper Heads in the Method of Mr. Wingate, and Mr. Washington's Abridgements.

Old Calif. London: Printed for John Nicholson, 1704.

Sabin No. 81. Contains Acts and Laws pertaining to the Negro and Slavery then in force.

Bought from Walter M. Hill of Chicago.

Account of a Shooting Excursion on the Mountains near Dromilly Estate, in the parish of Trelawny, and Island of Jamaica, in the month of October, 1824. London: Printed by Harvey and Darton, 1825.

Sabin No. 25556; Howard Part 1, page 1. They were hunting escaped slaves.

Bought from Leon Kashnor of London.

An Account of the Endeavors Used by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, To instruct the Negro Slaves in New York, Together with Two of Bp. Gibson's Letters on that Subject.

Printed at London in 1730. Bound in Full Calif, gilt top, other edges uncut, by Morrell.

Sabin No. 33800 quite properly attributes this tract to David Humphreys. Work, page 294.

Bought from The Rosenbach Company of Philadelphia.

An Account of the Late Intended Insurrection among a portion of the Blacks of this City. Published by the Authority of the Corporation of Charleston. Half morocco, uncut edges. Charleston, 1822.

Work page 348. Not in Sabin. An account of the horrible Vezey plot which changed the status of slaves in South Carolina from the most liberal conditions to the most restricted.

Bought from Edward Eberstadt of New York.

Pennsylvania. An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery. Caption title. 16 pages. (Philadelphia, 1781).

A Variant issue not noted by bibliographers. Contains also:

An Act to give Relief to certain Persons taking Refuge in this State, with respect to their Slaves. Also: Rules for the Regulation of the Society for the Relief of Free Negroes unlawfully held in Bondage.

Bought from Goodspeed's in Boston.

Address of a Convention of Delegates from the Abolition Society to the Citizens of the United States. 8vo. (New York, 1794).

Evans No. 26531; Sabin No. 81755; not in Hubbard, Work, etc. From the collection of Chancellor James Kent. A powerful Anti-Slavery address, the author of which has not been revealed by name to my knowledge. Bought from Edward Eberstadt in New York.

Address of The Committee Appointed by the Friends of Southern Rights to the people of Mississippi December 10, 1850. Published by order of the Central Southern Rights Association. 8vo, 13 pages. Jackson: Fall and Marshall, Printers, 1850.

Not in Owen and other bibliographies consulted. A masterly pro-slavery address in which Congressional acts and Federal decisions are assailed as unconstitutional. The address is signed on behalf of the committee by J. M. Clayton; J. I. Guion; Roger Barton; T. Jones Stewart; J. J. McRae; C. R. Clifton; C. P. Smith, J. A. Quitman and Jo Bell.

Bought from E. J. Wesson, Mansfield, Ohio.

'More Ground To Cover'

Negro's Gains In Past Century

pation Proclamation. At the beginning of it, there was slavery. At the end, there is citizenship. Citizenship, however, is a fragile word with an ambivalent meaning. The condition of citizenship is not yet full-blown or fully realized for the American Negro. There is still more ground to cover.

"The final chapter in the struggle for equality has yet to be written."

Almost half of the report

deals with developments since the end of World War II because "the most positive and fundamental civil-rights developments have taken place within the past 10 or 15 years."

The report recorded the efforts of Negroes through such groups as the N.A.A.C.P., Urban League, and more recently the various student groups.

It said the 1954 Supreme Court school-desegregation de-

cision, voting safeguards in the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960, the Interstate Commerce Commission's 1961 travel-desegregation order, and Presidential orders in the fields of employment and housing were key developments in the past decade.

In the South, the report said, "the problem may be characterized generally as resistance to the established law of the land and to social change. The

Lincoln Kin Calls Bob Kennedy 'Impetuous' Over Integration

Manchester, Vt., Feb. 12 (AP)—"Bobby Kennedy is just too impetuous on this whole integration question," Abraham Lincoln's great-granddaughter said Tuesday.

Miss Mary Lincoln Beckwith, 65, reflecting on racial problems as the nation observed the Great Emancipator's birthday, declared she believed in the principle of integration.

"But you can't force it down people's throats," she added.

Miss Beckwith, who lives on a 1,000-acre dairy farm here, said Negro James Meredith probably would have had much less trouble entering the University of Mississippi if the Federal Government "hadn't used officers to shove him in there."

She said Attorney General Robert F. Ken-

nedy should try gentle persuasion when integration crises develop in the South.

Would this have been Lincoln's approach today?

"I can't say. I'm as far away from him as anyone else," she said.

But Miss Beckwith added that Robert Kennedy should follow the example of his brother, the President, "who seems to be going much slower" in civil rights.

"It's not the color of skin that causes all the trouble," she said. "It's whether you like the individual. And you can't be forced to like an individual."

She said education will be the key to solving racial difficulties.

"Just remember the old saying, 'A woman convinced against her will is a woman unconvinced still.'"

Abe's Great-Granddaughter Speaks

Lincoln's Kin Raps Forcing Integration

MANCHESTER, Vt. (UPI)—Abraham Lincoln's great-granddaughter is opposed to "the aggression of the federal government in forcing integration on the South."

Referring to her great-grandfather's 154th birthday anniversary, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, said:

"This is a good time to reflect, and I think Abe Lincoln would do a lot of reflecting himself if her were here."

HER FAMILY LIVED IN SOUTH

Miss Beckwith, whose family lived in Kentucky and South Carolina, has lived more than a half-century at "Hildene," a 1,000-acre dairy farm built by her grandfather, Robert Todd Lincoln.

"We're Southerners," she said, "but I don't think of the South as a separate culture. It's part of the Union. The aggression of

the federal government in forcing integration concerns me, and I disagree with the stand taken by Atty. Gen. Robert Kennedy on this matter."

Miss Beckwith thinks the segregation problem stems from the fact "that people and animals just don't like strangers. And when strangers are suddenly thrown together, people and animals alike bristle."

"It's a curious sort of provincialism," she said, "yet it is absolutely universal. The question is not confined to the Southern Negroes. We have it here in Vermont with the migrant workers in the summer."

"They have had it in Massachusetts, as I recall, especially with the Portuguese. And it's the same question in Africa and other parts of the world."

IT TAKES TIME

Miss Beckwith said part of the difficulty is "that we've come together so suddenly with the airplane and other means.

People just can't grasp the situation."

Regarding desegregation, Miss Beckwith observed:

"I think we are moving along the right lines, but the federal government is a little too aggressive."

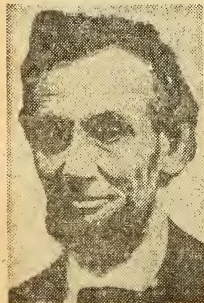
"I realize that the process of integration must be seen to be taking a very long time to some people. But I think it may take even more time than it has. It's like nature which takes an

awfully long time in its evolution."

Miss Beckwith said you cannot force something like this down people's throats.

"I am not a pacifist," she said, "but I am concerned by all this aggressiveness and I would probably punch someone in the nose who is aggressive."

"I think more is accomplished by reasoning, brotherly love and simple human kindness, rather than the aggression which I think is shown by both sides."



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

CHICAGO HISTORY

*An informal publication devoted in the main to the
Society's museum, library and activities.*

PAUL M. ANGLE, *Editor*

The Chicago Historical Society
Lincoln Park at North Avenue, Chicago 60614

The Illinois Black Laws

THE PROCLAMATION of Emancipation was issued by Abraham Lincoln, an Illinoisan. The author of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery throughout the United States, was Lyman Trumbull, United States Senator from Illinois. And Illinois was the first state to ratify that amendment.

One might assume from these facts that in Illinois the Negro could have expected sympathy and fair treatment. Quite the opposite. For almost fifty years the state had a "black code" that could only be called savage, and the disabilities under which the Negro lived were not removed until the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment was assured.

Almost from the beginning Illinois had slaves within its boundaries. The early French settlers used them as laborers and house servants, and on the whole treated them kindly. When Illinois passed under British rule at the end of the French and Indian War, Negro slaves numbered 900 in a total population of 3,000. The British imposed no restriction on slaveholding, nor, with one exception, did the United States after the Revolutionary War. The exception was a clause in the Ordinance of 1787 stipulating that there should be "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude" in the terri-

tory northwest of the Ohio River. But the ordinance guaranteed to the inhabitants their "rights and property." In the interpretation of the settlers the second clause confirmed their right to the slaves they already held; the first only prevented the introduction of more slaves. Besides, the way seemed to be open for voluntary servitude—the system by which Negroes could indenture themselves to whites for limited periods.

As Illinois prepared for statehood in 1818, a census was taken between April 1 and June 1. Of a total population of 34,610, "servants or slaves" numbered 733, "free people of color," 313. The holders of slaves and indentured servants were worried. They knew that the state constitution would have to prohibit slavery, but they were determined to retain their property. They hit upon a devious expedient: they would give lip service to the principle of freedom, and then, after attaining statehood, change the constitution to permit slavery. A state was sovereign, wasn't it?

Accordingly, the constitution adopted on August 26, 1818, contained an article declaring that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall hereafter be introduced into this State otherwise than for the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." The remainder of the article dealt with indentures, in effect validating those already existing but limiting the terms of those to be made in the future.

When the constitution was presented to the Congress for approval some attention centered on the anti-slavery article. One member of the House objected that it was "not sufficiently conclusive in the rejection of slavery." Other members saw nothing remiss, and after a brief discussion the act admitting the new state was passed by a vote of 117 to 34. The Senate approved the measure without a roll call.

In 1818 most of the people of the United States subscribed to two assumptions: 1. that slaves were property, not persons; and 2. that Negroes, either slave or free, were different from whites and had to be kept in a subordinate

position. Certainly few in Illinois, which drew most of its original settlers from Kentucky and Tennessee, would have disagreed. And what better way was there to keep Negroes in a subordinate position than by enacting into law the black codes in force in those states, and, in fact, in many others?

So the first general assembly of Illinois adopted its own code, which the governor approved on March 30, 1819. The law, very detailed, provided that no black or mulatto could reside in the state without a certificate of freedom which had to be recorded by the circuit clerk of the county in which he intended to live. No person could bring slaves into the state for the purpose of emancipating them without posting bond in the amount of \$1,000 for each slave. No one could hire an unregistered Negro. Negroes without certificates could be apprehended by the sheriff and hired out to the highest bidder. Negroes, mulattoes, and Indians were forbidden to purchase any servant except of their own color.

The law did not spare the lash. In all cases of penal laws where free persons were punishable by fines, servants were to be punished by whipping, twenty lashes for every \$8.00, but no more than forty lashes at one time. Any servant found ten miles from the home of his master without a pass could receive up to thirty-five lashes. "Riots, routs, unlawful assemblies, trespasses and seditious speeches" would earn slaves or servants up to thirty-nine stripes. If a master permitted three or more slaves or servants to assemble "for the purpose of dancing, or revelling, either by night or by day," the master was to be fined \$20.00 and the offending slaves or servants to be whipped, but not to exceed thirty-nine stripes.

On paper, the law was not entirely one-sided. Servants were to be provided with wholesome and sufficient food, clothing, and lodging, and at the end of their service were to be given a "coat, waistcoat, pair of breeches, and shoes, two pair of stockings, two shirts, a hat and blanket." If any

master was remiss in his prescribed duties, the circuit court might take remedial action. The circuit court could also receive complaints of servants as to immoderate correction and insufficient allowances of food or clothing. (One can imagine a poor Negro availing himself of this recourse.)

In a short time one of the greatest of Illinoisans fell foul of this law. Edward Coles, native of Virginia, private secretary to President Madison from 1809 to 1815, decided to emigrate to Illinois. In the spring of 1819 he set out with a number of slaves he had inherited upon his father's death several years earlier. With a flair for the dramatic, inconsistent with his colorless personality, he emancipated them while floating down the Ohio River. Arriving in Illinois, he provided each former slave with a plot of ground sufficient for his subsistence.

Coles was unaware of the law of March 30, 1819. In fact, at the time of manumission it had not yet been published. In 1822 he was elected governor only to be sued for having brought freed Negroes into the state without posting bond for them. The court assessed a fine of \$2,000 against him, which the next legislature nullified.

By this time Coles was deep in the bitterest political controversy of early Illinois history. Those who, when the state was admitted to the Union, had planned to amend its constitution to permit slavery, decided that the time had come to make their move. In four years they had gained adherents, for many Illinoisans saw with dismay the heavy influx of settlers to Missouri, which had come in as a slave state in 1821. The pro-slavery forces began to agitate for the calling of a constitutional convention in 1824 with the avowed purpose of opening Illinois to slavery. The agitation seethed for eighteen months, with Coles one of the anti-convention leaders. In an election held on August 2, 1824, the voters decided, 6,640 to 4,972, against the convention and, in effect, in favor of freedom.

But not, God knows, in favor of Negro equality. Not only did the black laws remain in force; they were made even

more stringent. In 1829 the general assembly provided that no Negro or mulatto who was not a citizen of one of the states of the Union could enter Illinois unless he gave bond in the amount of \$1,000 and was possessed of a certificate of freedom. The same act prohibited marriage between the races under penalty of stripes, fine, and imprisonment. This law was the consequence of a report by Joseph Kitchell of Crawford County, in southeastern Illinois, holding that the presence of Negroes with masters was a moral and political evil and that their presence without masters was an even greater evil.

The Revised Statutes of 1845 incorporated the laws of 1819 and 1829 and added another section which prohibited persons of the two races to live together "in an open state of adultery or fornication." For each conviction the guilty persons were to be fined up to \$500.00 and imprisoned in the penitentiary for terms not to exceed one year. For subsequent offenses fines and terms of imprisonment were to increase in arithmetical progression.

In the 1840s Abolitionists and Free Soilers in Illinois worked for the repeal of the black laws. Their arguments forced the delegates to the constitutional convention of 1847 to pay some attention to the subject. Mr. Bond of Clinton County offered a resolution prohibiting free Negroes from coming into the state, and forbidding anyone to bring slaves into Illinois and set them free. Bond argued that free Negroes had already become "a great annoyance, if not a nuisance." Mr. Brockman of Brown County asserted that the people of his county were unanimous in their opposition to the immigration of Negroes. "The negroes," he declared, "have no rights in common with the people, they can have no rights; the distinction between the two races is so great as to preclude the possibility of their ever living together upon equal terms." Mr. Allen of Franklin County stated that he was in favor of preventing the Negro from entering the state. "Those that were here were good for nothing, either to the state, the church, or themselves. They were all

idle and lazy and the part of the state that he came from was overrun with them." Mr. Leman, of Dewitt County in central Illinois, did not believe that Negroes were human beings. "If any gentleman thought they were, he would ask him to look at a negro's foot! What was his leg doing in the middle of it? If that was not sufficient, let him go and examine their nose, then look at their lips. Why, their skulls were three inches thicker than white people's." According to the reporter, this sally was greeted with roars of laughter.

Delegates from the northern part of the state fought valiantly against the anti-immigration provision but lost by a vote of eighty to fifty-five. But they did win one concession: the anti-Negro provision would be submitted separately to popular vote. The provision read: "The General Assembly shall at its first session under the amended constitution pass such laws as will effectually prohibit free persons of color from immigrating to and settling in this state, and to effectually prevent the owners of slaves from bringing them into this state for the purpose of setting them free." The voters approved this section 50,261 to 21,297; the vote on the entire constitution was 60,585 in favor, 15,903 opposed.

The legislature did not implement this provision until 1853 when it passed a law, approved February 12, providing that any person who brought a Negro, free or slave, into the state, would be fined not less than \$100.00 or more than \$500.00, and imprisoned not more than one year. Any Negro coming into the state of his own volition and remaining ten days would be subject to a fine of \$50.00, and if the fine was not paid, sold to any person who would pay it.

The passage of this law brought criticism from unexpected sources. The *New Orleans Bee* called it "an act of special and savage ruthlessness," and the *Jonesboro Gazette*, published in deepest Egypt, asked: "How long will the people of this hitherto 'Free State' suffer this shameful enactment to disgrace their statute book?"

According to the census of 1850, 5,436 Negroes resided within the state. Of them Arthur Charles Cole wrote, in *The*

Era of the Civil War: "The Negro population of the state dwelt in true humility in obscure corners of the towns and cities, with their own churches and sometimes separate schools maintained with the assistance of white patrons; only now and then were appeals made for aid in purchasing the freedom of relatives in the south. The tranquillity of the black men's domicile was disturbed by kidnappers and slave hunters. Cases of kidnapping and carrying off of free Negroes were fairly common in the southern part of the state, where organized bands of kidnappers operated boldly under the knowledge that the Negroes would not be admitted to the witness stand. Matters became so bad in Cairo that the mayor called out the citizens to break up the operations of a local gang of armed kidnappers, who worked in league with a band of Missourians."

Despite the law of 1853 the Civil War brought a large number of Negroes to Illinois. Under the federal confiscation act the slaves of rebel planters were given the status of contrabands and shipped north. Many were sent to Cairo and distributed over the state. Aversion to them undoubtedly contributed to the last popular affirmation of the black laws.

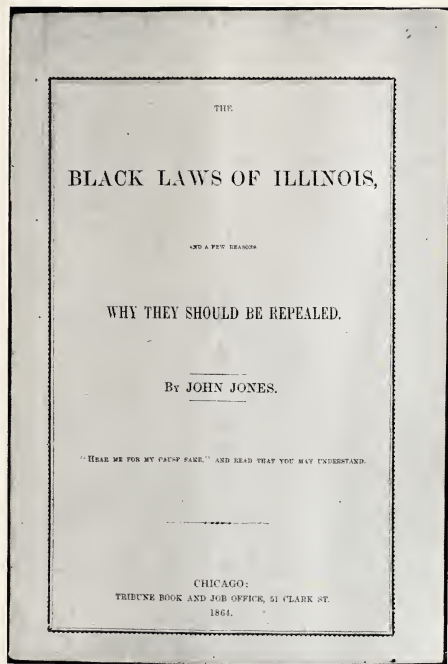
In 1862 Illinois held a constitutional convention. Article XVIII of the instrument adopted by that body provided that no Negro or mulatto should migrate to or settle in the state, and that no Negro or mulatto could vote or hold office. As in 1847, this article was submitted separately to the voters. The section barring Negroes and mulattoes from the state was carried by a majority of 100,590 in a total vote of 240,000; that prohibiting them from voting received a majority of 140,622, even though the voters rejected the constitution as a whole.

But public sentiment soon changed. The war department, heeding the overwhelming anti-Negro vote on the constitutional provisions, transferred the contraband camp from Cairo to Island No. 10 in the Mississippi. Illinoisans could see that the Proclamation of Emancipation had not caused

the roof of the nation to fall in. It was obvious that the end of slavery was approaching, and that the Negro could not long be held in utter subjection. Agitation for the repeal of the black laws increased.

One of the leaders in the repeal movement was John Jones, a free colored man of Chicago. A tailor, Jones had amassed a small fortune, at the same time winning the respect of the leading citizens. In November, 1864, he published a pamphlet entitled *The Black Laws of Illinois, and a Few Reasons Why They Should be Repealed*, a copy of which is in the library of the Chicago Historical Society. In his appeal, addressed to the people of Illinois, Jones quoted the black laws section by section and attacked each in turn. He based his arguments on constitutional and legal principles and upon right and fairness, and supported them by quotations from men whose opinions deserved respect. He admitted that many sections of the black code were dead letters but argued cogently that some of the disabilities laid upon Negroes were "a living, active reality." His prime example was the section which read: "No black or mulatto person, or Indian, shall be permitted to give evidence in favor of or against any white person whatsoever." "As matters now stand," Jones wrote, "you cannot prove by us, that this or that man (if white), run into a valuable load of merchandise and destroyed it: therefore you are liable to lose hundreds of dollars any day, if your wagons are driven by colored men, and you know they are in great numbers."

Jones concluded with an eloquent appeal. "I assert, without the fear of successful contradiction, that the colored people of America have always been the friends of America, and thanks be to God, we are *today* the friends of America; and allow me to say, my white fellow-citizens, God being our helper, we mean to remain on American soil with you. When you are in peace and prosperity, we rejoice; and when you are in trouble and adversity, we are sad. And this, notwithstanding proscription follows us in the school-house, and, indeed, drives us out; follows us in the church, in the



Outside Cover of John Jones's Pamphlet

lecture room, in the concert hall, the theatre, and all places of public instruction and amusement; follows us to the grave;—for I assure you, fellow-citizens, that today a

colored man cannot buy a *burying* lot in the city of Chicago for his own use. All of this grows out of the proscriptive laws of this State against our poor, unfortunate colored people. And more than this, the cruel treatment that we receive daily at the hands of a portion of your foreign population, is all based upon these enactments. They, seeing that you, by your laws, have ignored us, and left us out in the cold, think it is for some crime we have committed, and therefore take license to insult and maltreat us every day on the highways and byways as we pass by them. They think we have no rights which white men are bound to respect, and according to your laws they think right."

Jones appended an appeal to Governor Yates to recommend repeal of the black laws to the legislature when it convened in January, 1865. Yates did make such an appeal in his final message to the legislature. "Of the black laws I have but little to say," he stated, "except to recommend that you sweep them from the statute book with a swift, relentless hand." But Yates said more. "In reply to those who say that if these laws are repealed we shall have a large influx of free negroes into this State, I have to answer that the laws are now almost a dead letter. Negroes are not kept out of the State by them, for it is only now and then, indeed a rare case, that a man can be found who is barbarian enough to insist upon the application of the penalties imposed by these laws." Yates argued further that with the return of peace Negroes would have so many more opportunities in the South that they would want to stay there. He even predicted an exodus of free Negroes from North to South.

On February 4, 1865, both houses of the legislature passed a simple act repealing the black laws as they stood in the Revised Statutes of 1845, and also the act of 1853 preventing the immigration of free Negroes. The vote in the house was 49 to 30; in the senate 13 to 9. Governor Oglesby affixed his signature on February 7.

The *Illinois State Journal* of Springfield, so close to

Lincoln that it was almost his personal organ, published the following paragraph in its issue of February 7:

"A large number of the colored people of this city assembled on North 4th street yesterday, and fired 62 guns in honor of the senators and representatives who voted for the repeal of the odious black laws. After the firing the company proceeded to the Methodist Colored Church where they were addressed by several colored gentlemen among whom was Mr. John Jones of Chicago, who made a most interesting and able speech, well worthy of a report if we had room. Rev. Mr. Caven read the black laws; he was listened to with the most marked attention. The meeting was orderly, and everything was conducted in a manner honorable to those who had the supervision of the affair."

It is gratifying to note that in 1871 John Jones was elected to the Cook County Board of Commissioners, the first Negro to hold public office in Illinois.

Dixon and Dresden in 1842

BEFORE the 1850s, when the new art of photography began to flower, we have precious few pictorial representations of the Illinois scene. Some other parts of the country fared better. William G. Wall's *Hudson River Portfolio*, with several editions between 1820 and 1828, is an unforgettable record of that beautiful valley; many artists made paintings and engravings of Niagara Falls; George Catlin preserved the western Indians and their camps for posterity. Except for J. C. Wild and Henry Lewis, who caught some of the towns along the Mississippi River, few artists considered the prairies and inland settlements of Illinois worth their time, trouble, and skill.

Therefore we were inordinately pleased when we were able to buy, some time ago, a series of eleven watercolors, three of which show Dixon, Illinois, the nearby "Winnebago Swamp," and the tiny hamlet of Dresden in Grundy County.

(Most of the other scenes are of Mackinac.) The Illinois subjects were painted in 1842. All are the work of Henry Francis Ainslie, then a captain in the Royal Irish Rifles.

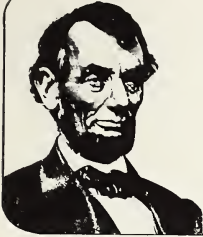
A diligent search, in which Canadian and British authorities cooperated graciously, failed to reveal more than the bare facts of Ainslie's life. He was born in 1804, the oldest son of George Robert Ainslie, then a lieutenant colonel in the British army. The father rose to the rank of major general and won a reputation as a numismatist. The son was commissioned an ensign in the 83rd Foot, later the Royal Irish Rifles, and now the Ulster Rifles. In 1842 he held the rank of captain and was stationed in Canada. After moving through the grades of major and lieutenant colonel he was commissioned colonel in 1855 and retired. He died in London in 1879. The *Times*, which published an obituary, made no mention of a wife or widow.

Ainslie's name appears in no art reference book, leading to the conclusion, which his watercolors suggest, that he was an amateur, or, as we designate the breed today, a Sunday painter. But his work has strength and precision, and his colors a boldness which our illustrations cannot convey. In fact, because of the limitations of space, our reproductions indicate the quality of the originals very imperfectly.

Why Ainslie happened to be in the United States in 1842 no one knows. We can only surmise that he obtained a leave of absence and decided to spend it in the young republic south of Canada, then a subject of great interest to Englishmen. Dickens, as those with a flair for dates may remember, made his first American visit that same year, and less well known Britishers swarmed all over the place.

Ainslie did not limit his brush to American subjects. Altogether, he made at least twenty-six watercolors and drawings of Canadian scenes, which the Public Archives of Canada acquired in 1955.

(We include among our illustrations two of the Mackinac scenes, because they show the artist at his best. He entitled the first one: "United States, Mackinaw Island & Fort,



Lincoln Lore

November, 1975

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation...Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1653

Emancipation: 113 Years Later

Editor's Note: I am indebted to Professor G. S. Boritt, formerly of Washington University in Saint Louis, for bringing the paper on which this *Lincoln Lore* is based to my attention. I am especially indebted to his student, Yvette Fulcher, for allowing me to see the results of her industrious survey of opinion on Abraham Lincoln among blacks today and to use that study as the basis for this article. I am performing strictly a reporter's role here; Ms. Fulcher asked all the questions, tabulated all the answers, and, in a word, did all the work. She had excellent guidance. Professor Boritt is the author of numerous articles on Lincoln, including "A Case of Political Suicide? Lincoln and the Mexican War" in the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, and the forthcoming "The Voyage to the Colony of Lincoln: The Sixteenth President, Black Colonization, and the Defense Mechanism of Avoidance." He is working on a book on Lincoln's economic thought. Ms. Fulcher was a freshman student in Professor Boritt's course on Abraham Lincoln last year and has, I am sure all will agree, a most promising future ahead of her.

It should be remembered that Ms. Fulcher attempts to quantify the unquantifiable. She had to make allowances in her final tabulations for intensity of feeling, tone of response, etc. Incidentally, the introductory remarks are altogether mine and are based, in part, on James M. McPherson's useful collection, *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union* (New York, 1965).

M. E. N., Jr.

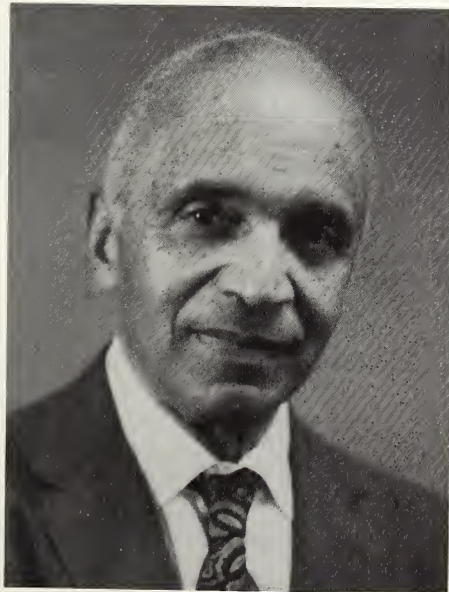
Skepticism among some black people greeted even Abraham Lincoln's first appearance on the national scene in 1860. H. Ford Douglass, an Illinois black leader, suggested at an abolitionist picnic on the Fourth of July in Framingham, Massachusetts, that "Abraham Lincoln is simply a Henry Clay Whig, and he believes just as Henry Clay believed. . . . And Henry Clay was just as odious to the anti-slavery cause and anti-slavery men as ever was John C. Calhoun. . . ." By degrees, the black orator worked up to the drastic assertion that "Abraham Lincoln. . . is on the side of this Slave Power. . . . that has possession of the Federal Government." Douglass was misinformed on at least one point, for he said that Lincoln's proposal was "to let the people and the Territories regulate their domestic institutions in their own way." This was the solution, of course, of Stephen Douglas but not of Abraham Lincoln.

H. Ford Douglass represented only a minority among the black minority in 1860, and by 1865, his opinions had surely shrunk in influence. Even the first cautious rumblings of Lincoln's great emancipation policy were enthusiastically greeted by black men. When a message to Congress of March 6, 1862, suggested federal compensation to any state which moved to abolish slavery gradually, the *Anglo-African*, a Negro newspaper, called it "an event which sent a thrill of joy throughout christendom." The paper called it "a stroke of policy, grandly reticent on the part of its author, yet most timely and sagacious, which has secured for Abraham Lincoln a confidence and admiration on the part of the people, the whole loyal people, such as no man has enjoyed in the present era." Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation increased the enthusiasm in a crescendo which erupted into wild rejoicing when, on April 4, 1865, the Great Emancipator visited the conquered capital of the Confederacy. A Negro correspondent reported the scene of Lincoln's visit to Richmond this way:

The great event after the capture of the city was the arrival of President Lincoln in it. . . . There is no describing the scene along the route. The colored population was wild with enthusiasm. Old men thanked God in a very boisterous manner, and old women shouted upon the pavement as high as they had ever done at a religious revival. . . .

Everyone declares that Richmond never before presented such a spectacle of jubilee. It must be confessed that those who participated in the informal reception of the President were mainly negroes. There were many whites, but they were lost in the great concourse of American citizens of African descent. . . .

I visited yesterday several of the slave jails, where men, women, and children were confined, or herded, for the examination of purchases. . . . The owners, as soon as they were aware that we were coming, opened wide the doors and told the confined inmates they



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation
FIGURE 1. Professor Benjamin Quarles

were free. The poor souls could not realize it until they saw the Union army. Even then they thought it must be a pleasant dream, but when they saw Abraham Lincoln they were satisfied that their freedom was perpetual. One enthusiastic old negro woman exclaimed: "I know that I am free, for I have seen Father Abraham and felt him."

When the President returned to the flag-ship of Admiral Porter, in the evening, he was taken from the wharf in a cutter. Just as he pushed off, amid the cheering of the crowd, another good colored female shouted, "Don't drown Massa Abe, for God's sake!"

After President Lincoln was assassinated ten days later, Edgar Dinsmore, a black soldier from New York, wrote his fiancée:

We mourn for the loss of our great and good President as a loss irreparable. Humanity has lost a firm advocate, our race its Patron Saint, and the good of all the world a fitting object to emulate. . . . The name Abraham Lincoln will ever be cherished in our hearts, and none will more delight to list his name in reverence than the future generations of our people.

Most Lincoln students have suspected for some time that the predictions of eternal reverence for Lincoln on the part of American Negroes have proved to be in error. There have been some undercurrents of ambivalence all along. At the inaugural ceremonies of the Freedmen's Memorial Monument to Abraham Lincoln in Washington, D. C., on April 14, 1876, "nearly all of the colored organizations in the city" heard Frederick Douglass, black abolitionist, give a memorable and prophetic address. He pointed out carefully that this was the first occasion on which black Americans "have sought to do honor to any American great man." Before Abraham Lincoln, he intimated, Negroes had had no reason to celebrate American history. Then, warning his audience that "Truth is proper and beautiful at all times and in all places," Douglass dropped his bombshell: "Abraham Lincoln was not, in the fullest sense of the word, either our man or our model. . . . He was pre-eminently the white man's President. . . ." Douglass conceded to his "white fellow-citizens, a pre-eminence in this worship" of Lincoln. "You are the children of Abraham Lincoln," he said. "We are at best only his step-children, children by adoption, children by force of circumstances and necessity." Douglass then catalogued the inadequacies he found in Lincoln's policies. Above all, "He was ready and willing at any time during the first years of his administration to deny, postpone and sacrifice the rights of humanity in the colored people, to promote the welfare of the white people of this country. . . . The Union was more to him than our freedom or our future. . . ." The specific charges were these:

. . . he tarried long in the mountain; . . . he strangely told us that we were the cause of the war; . . . he still more strangely told us to leave the land in which we were born; . . . he refused to employ our arms in the defence of the Union; . . . after accepting our services as colored soldiers, he refused to retaliate when we were murdered as colored prisoners; . . . he told us he would save the Union if he could with slavery; . . . he revoked the proclamation of emancipation of General Fremont; . . . he refused to remove the commander of the Army of the Potomac, who was more zealous in his efforts to protect slavery than suppress rebellion. . . .

Except for quotable quotes illustrating Lincoln's racial views before the Civil War, Douglass had laid out the black case against Lincoln largely as it has been laid out ever since by any black who disliked him. The quotable quotes and the public controversy necessary to make the case against Lincoln a subject for popular consumption were both provided, ironically, by the Citizens' Councils of America, white Southern groups which opposed passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In advertisements widely printed in major American newspapers, including the *Washington Post*, in February of 1964, the Citizens' Councils claimed that three quotations represented "Lincoln's Hopes for the Negro In His Own Words." Two of the three dealt with colonization, and the third was an answer to Stephen Douglas, protesting that he (Lincoln) was not "in favor of bringing about in any way the social and poli-

tical equality of the white and black races." The irony of this campaign was that it may have convinced blacks and left whites unconvinced. Congressman Fred Schwengel of Iowa, a member of the Bibliography Committee for *Lincoln Lore*, commented simply: "Sedulous selection, it is well known, can make the Scriptures seem the work of Satan."

Nevertheless, a period of black disillusionment, epitomized by Lerone F. Bennett's article in *Ebony* in 1968 ("Was Abe Lincoln a White Supremacist?"), began, and it has apparently reached deeply into the black community.

We can be sure of very little in this area because, despite its being a topic on which almost everyone has an opinion, scientific surveys of Negro opinion on Abraham Lincoln are few and far between. A brief check of our files at the Lincoln National Life Foundation uncovered no such surveys whatever. Therefore, the significance of Yvette Fulcher's survey of "The Attitudes of Blacks Today Toward Abraham Lincoln" is great. It provides us with our first concrete sampling of this very important segment of opinion on Abraham Lincoln.

Ms. Fulcher's survey was conducted by mail. One hundred twenty persons were contacted and all but thirteen responded. The questions were designed so as not to be loaded in favor of one answer or another and so as to be understandable to "not only a black Representative in the United States Congress . . . but also a black former convict with an eighth grade education." These are the six questions:

1. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the name "Abraham Lincoln?"
2. What is black colonization?
3. Was Abraham Lincoln good or bad for blacks in the 1860's?
4. Is Abraham Lincoln and what he stood for good or bad for blacks in 1974?
5. What is the Emancipation Proclamation?
6. What is your opinion of Abraham Lincoln?

Ms. Fulcher broke the responses down by some simple social classifications. Government officials, business executives, doctors, lawyers, and writers were classified as black professionals. Engineers, nurses, union leaders, school officials, and teachers were classified as higher white-collar workers. Firemen, policemen, social workers, secretaries, and soldiers were classified as lower white-collar workers. Dock workers, trash collectors, custodians, and assembly line workers were classified as wage or blue-collar workers. Another classification included the unemployed, welfare recipients, present and former convicts, and criminals. Mothers were considered a special classification as well, perhaps because of Ms. Fulcher's own reading of the importance of mothers in light of the history of the black family. The elderly were given a category to themselves, as were students.

The tabulated results of the survey, broken down according to these categories, appear below:

Professionals

	Question			Question		
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	3	4	4	3	4	4
Anti-Lincoln	12	10	13	14	13	13
Neutral	2	3	0	0	0	0

Higher White-Collar

	Question			Question		
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	9	3	5	5	6	6
Anti-Lincoln	10	13	13	12	13	13
Neutral	0	3	1	2	0	0

Lower White-Collar

	Question			Question		
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	16	16	17	17	17	17
Anti-Lincoln	4	3	4	3	4	4
Neutral	1	2	0	1	0	0

Blue-Collar

	Question					
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	3	1	2	3	3	3
Anti-Lincoln	8	8	9	8	8	8
Neutral	0	2	0	0	0	0

Unemployed

	Question					
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	2	1	2	2	2	2
Anti-Lincoln	6	6	6	6	6	6
Neutral	0	1	0	0	0	0

Mothers

	Question					
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	3	1	1	1	1	1
Anti-Lincoln	0	2	2	2	2	2
Neutral	0	0	0	0	0	0

Elderly

	Question					
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	2	2	2	2	0	2
Anti-Lincoln	0	0	0	0	2	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0	0	0

Students

	Question					
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Pro-Lincoln	4	3	5	5	5	5
Anti-Lincoln	21	20	20	20	21	20
Neutral	1	3	1	1	0	1

Summary of Survey

	PRO-LINCOLN	ANTI-LINCOLN	TOTAL
PROFESSIONALS	4	13	17
HIGHER WHITE-COLLAR	6	13	19
LOWER WHITE-COLLAR	17	4	21
BLUE-COLLAR	3	8	11
UNEMPLOYED	2	6	8
MOTHERS	1	2	3
ELDERLY	2	0	2
STUDENTS	6*	20	26
TOTAL	41	66	107

*Includes one neutral.

Ms. Fulcher provided an analysis of the figures and provided percentages which make the survey even more startling. Three-fourths of the black professionals are anti-Lincoln. Almost seventy percent of the higher white-collar workers are anti-Lincoln. Three-fourths of the black unemployed are anti-Lincoln. Two-thirds of the black mothers are less than enthusiastic about Lincoln. Almost eighty percent of black students are anti-Lincoln, and that figure, of course, practically guarantees that future surveys will not see these figures turned around for some time to come. Almost three-fourths of blue-collar workers are anti-Lincoln. Only the elderly and lower white-collar workers retain the respect black soldier Edgar Dinsmore predicted would be Lincoln's forever. All the elderly interviewed and eighty-one percent of the lower white-collar workers are pro-Lincoln.

Among black professionals, knowledge of Lincoln's activity in behalf of colonization is high. In fact, their opinions al-

most perfectly reproduce the opinions of black professional Frederick Douglass one hundred years ago. They feel that Lincoln freed the slaves too slowly and that he did so only to save the Union, but they do realize that, in the context of the 1860's, Lincoln's policies certainly helped blacks. The minority opinion among black professionals is well represented by historian Benjamin Quarles, author of *Lincoln and the Negro*, still the definitive treatment of that subject in the field of Lincolniana. Quarles feels that Lincoln moved as fast in behalf of the slaves as public opinion would permit.

Opinions among the higher white-collar workers are similar to those among professionals, and this is important, for the group includes the teachers who will shape future opinions on Lincoln. The thirty-two percent of higher white-collar workers who are pro-Lincoln are an interesting group. They know about colonization, too, but they interpret it as Lincoln's efforts to lead blacks to self-help in a congenial atmosphere. They also feel that Lincoln wanted freedom for all, black and white.

The rest of the groups seem less aware of colonization. Blue-collar workers and the unemployed distrust Lincoln's motives for emancipation as "political." Although Ms. Fulcher does not say so, these groups seem to share with particular intensity the pervasive distrust of politics in American society in general. Incidentally, the minority in these groups who are pro-Lincoln are very pro-Lincoln and consider him a savior who alone stood between blacks and a continuing slave status for many years to come.

Black mothers seem to blame Lincoln for the plight of the freedman after emancipation. Black students, like black professionals and higher white-collar workers, are anti-Lincoln because Lincoln, they say, used freedom as a means to the end of saving the Union.

Those groups which are pro-Lincoln seem to be as aware of the facts of Lincoln's career as those that are anti-Lincoln. They merely interpret the facts differently. The elderly, for example, are aware that the Emancipation Proclamation did not free all the slaves, but they trust Lincoln's way of going about freeing the slaves.

Lower white-collar workers see all the difference in the world between legal freedom and legal slavery, and therefore they enthusiastically admire Lincoln as the bringer of freedom. They dismiss Lincoln's interest in colonization because it was always a voluntary rather than forced colonization which he envisioned. The only dissenters in this group dislike Lincoln because the Emancipation Proclamation itself did not actually free all the slaves and because freedmen were left in a poor condition.

There are encouraging signs for Lincoln's reputation even in this rather dismal reading of the current barometer of opinion. Most encouraging to anyone interested in history is the rather high level of information among people not selected, apparently, on a basis of interest in history. Thirty years ago, even ten or twenty years ago, knowledge of the practical effectiveness of the Emancipation Proclamation, of Lincoln's interest in colonization, or of his letter to Horace Greeley explaining his policies as a function of his duty to save the Union were considered fine points, subtleties which were well known in the profession but which were unknown to the man in the street. Blacks probably have a higher awareness of such things than whites today because these things are absolutely central to their history and because their history has become a major area of emphasis in all public education. Whatever the case, all historians and students of history should rejoice to see that they have not been talking simply to each other, and that things that were professional subtleties yesterday are today's common knowledge.

In regard to Lincoln's views on race and his policies concerning slavery, the fundamental pieces of evidence have not changed since Frederick Douglass's day, but popular opinion has changed in many ways. The results of a survey taken years hence might be quite different. Among historians, the sensational anti-Lincoln arguments of the late 1960's are clearly taking a new turn, and this survey proves that these changes in opinion become widespread in time.

CUMULATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY 1974-1975

Selections approved by a Bibliography Committee consisting of the following members: Dr. Kenneth A. Bernard, Belmont Arms, 31 Belmont St., Apt. C-2, South Easton, Mass.; Arnold Gates, 289 New Hyde Park Rd., Garden City, N.Y.; Carl Haverlin, 8619 Louise Avenue, Northridge, California; James T. Hickey, Illinois State Historical Library, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois; E. B. (Pete) Long, 607 S. 15th St., Laramie, Wyoming; Ralph G. Newman, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, Illinois; Hon. Fred Schwengel, 200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C.; Dr. Wayne C. Temple, 1121 S. 4th Street Court, Springfield, Illinois. New items available for consideration may be sent to the above persons, or the Lincoln National Life Foundation.

1974

ARMSTRONG, WILLIAM H.

1974-25

The Education of Abraham Lincoln/by William H. Armstrong/Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc./New York/[Copyright 1974 by William H. Armstrong. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 8 1/2" x 6 1/4", fr., 127 (1) pp., illus., price, \$4.64.

Juvenile literature

BROWNE, RAY B.

1974-26

Lincoln-Lore/Lincoln/in the/Popular Mind/edited/by/Ray B. Browne/with/a/foreword/by/Russel B. Nye/(Device)/Popular Press/Bowling Green, Ohio 43403/[Copyright 1974 by The Bowling Green University Popular Press, Ray B. Browne, Editor.]

Book, cloth, 9 1/4" x 6 1/4", xii p., 3-510 pp., illus., price, \$20.00.

CARTER III, SAMUEL

1974-27

The Riddle/Of/Dr. Mudd/By Samuel Carter III/(Device)/G. P. Putnam's Sons/New York/[Copyright 1974 by Samuel Carter III. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 8 1/2" x 5 1/4", 380 pp., maps on inside of front and back covers, illus., price, \$8.95.

COOLIDGE, OLIVIA

1974-28

Olivia Coolidge/(Device)/The Apprenticeship of Abraham Lincoln/Charles Scribner's Sons/New York/[Copyright 1974 by Olivia Coolidge. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 9 1/4" x 6 1/4", viii p., 242 pp., illus., price, \$6.95.

Juvenile literature

JONES, ALFRED

1974-29

Alfred Haworth Jones/Roosevelt's/Image/Brokers/Poets, Playwrights, and the/Use of the Lincoln Symbol/National University Publications/Kennikat Press . 1974/Port Washington, N.Y. . London/[Copyright 1974 by Alfred Haworth Jones. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 8 1/2" x 5 1/4", 134 (6) pp., price, \$8.95.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

1974-30

Lincoln Memorial University Press/(Device)/Fall, 1974/Vol. 76, No. 3/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical/research in the field of Lincolniana and/the Civil War, and to the promotion/of Lincoln Ideals in American/Education./Harrogate, Tenn.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/4" x 7 1/4", 117-168 pp., illus., price per single issue, \$1.50.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

1974-31

Lincoln Memorial University Press/(Device)/Winter, 1974/Vol. 76, No. 4/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical/research in the field of Lincolniana and/the Civil War, and to the promotion/of Lincoln Ideals in American/Education./Harrogate, Tenn.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/4" x 7 1/4", 169-228 pp., illus., price per single issue, \$1.50.

LONGFORD, LORD

1974-32

Great Lives/Abraham Lincoln/Lord Longford/Introduction by Elizabeth Longford/Portrait of Lincoln and

son)/Weidenfeld and Nicolson London/[Copyright 1974 by George Weidenfeld and Nicolson Limited and Book Club Associates. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 10" x 6 1/4", fr., 231 pp., scenes of Lincoln-Douglas debates on inside front and back covers, illus., price, \$8.50. British edition.

SORMANI, LUCA

1974-33

Lincoln/E Il Razzismo/Dopo La Schiavitù/(Device)/Edizioni Cremonese/Roma/[Published February 10, 1974 by Edizioni Cremonese, Roma. Copyright 1973 by Edizioni Cremonese, Roma. Entire contents of book printed in Italian language.]

Book, paperback, 7 1/4" x 4 1/4", 128 pp., price, \$2.50.

1975

ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY 1975-1

Illinois/History/Volume 28/Number 5/February 1975/Abraham Lincoln/Down the Mississippi to New Orleans—East-Central Illinois/Connections—Defeat Brings/Victory—River Traffic versus/Rail Traffic—Assassination/Attempts—"Leather Lungs" for/Lincoln—Views of the British/Press—The Summer White/House—Problems of the First/Lady—Ominous Dreams—Those/Who Stayed

Away—The Coffin/Conspiracy—Lincoln and the/Press—Historic Indian Canes/(Portrait of Lincoln)/A Young Mr. Lincoln/(Cover title)/[Copyright 1975 by the Illinois State Historical Society. Published by the Illinois State Historical Society, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois 62706.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10" x 7 1/4", pages 99-119, illus., price, 20¢.

ILL. STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1975-2

Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society/Volume LXVIII/Number 1/February 1975/Contents/3 Introduction/William K. Alderfer/9 Lincoln and Frederick Douglass: Another Debate/Christopher N. Breiseth/27 Lincoln and the Politics of Morality/Ronald D. Rietveld/45 Lincoln and the Weight of Responsibility/Don E. Fehrenbacher/57 Lincoln and Congress: Why Not Congress and Lincoln?/Harold M. Hyman/74 Lincolniana: Lincoln and the Printmakers/Harold Holzer/85 Book Reviews/96 Picture Credits/Cover: Statue erected in 1909 in the courthouse

square of Lincoln's birthplace, Hodgenville, Kentucky./Sculpture by Alexander Weinman./Copyright, Illinois State Historical Society, 1975 (Device) 14 Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois/(Abraham Lincoln Issue)/

Book, flexible boards, 9 1/4" x 7 1/4", 95 (1) pp., illus., price, \$2.00.

(LINCOLN MEMORIAL SHRINE, THE)

1975-3

A Selective Bibliography/Of/Books, Pamphlets (sic), Letters, Documents/And Other Materials/In/The Lincoln Memorial Shrine/(Picture of the shrine)/Redlands, California/1975/(Cover title)/

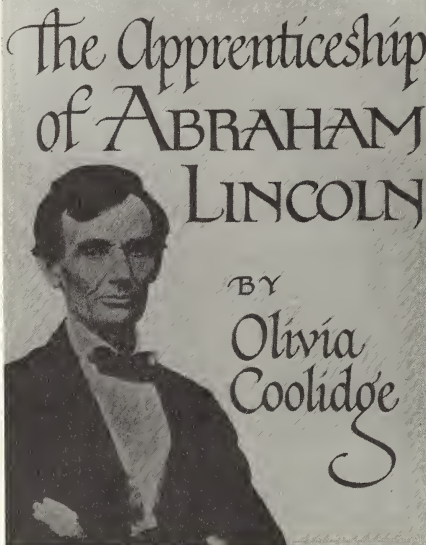
Pamphlet, paper, 8 1/2" x 5 1/4", 39 (1) pp., illus. (Contains a brief history of the shrine and a selective bibliography of their collections of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, art objects, photographs, stamps, coins, artifacts and periodicals.)

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

(1975)-4

The Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum/(Embossed portrait of Lincoln and lettering)/that government/of the people,/by the people,/for the people,/shall not perish/from the earth/(Cover title)/

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 11" x 8 1/2", 16 pp., illus. (Contains historical data on the formation and growth of Lincoln Memorial University, data and illustrations of its Lincoln collection along with an illustrated picture of its future goal, the construction of a new memorial, The Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum, to house its collection.)





Lincoln Lore

March, 1978

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1681

BLACK IMAGES OF LINCOLN IN THE AGE OF JIM CROW

by John David Smith

Editor's Note: The author of this article, John David Smith, joined the staff of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum in June, 1977. He received a Ph.D. in American History from the University of Kentucky, where he studied slavery and the Civil War. His numerous publications include "The Recruitment of Negro Soldiers in Kentucky, 1863-1865" in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* (October, 1974) and "Keep 'em in a fire-proof vault" — Pioneer Southern Historians Discover Plantation Records" to appear in *The South Atlantic Quarterly*.

M.E.N., Jr.

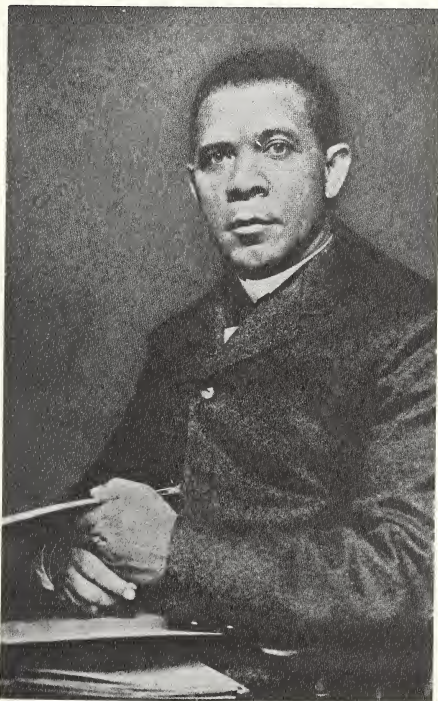
The years 1890-1920, a period of multifaceted reform which historians label the Progressive Era, was anything but an age of progress for American blacks. Driven by a variety of motives, Progressives instituted such diverse reforms as the direct primary, homogenization of milk, sanitation, conservation, and woman suffrage. But the Progressive movement had little interest in blacks and was notably backward looking on the race issue. As C. Vann Woodward has argued, the movement in the South — where almost 90 percent of American blacks lived — was largely "for whites only." And Northern reformers, too, tended to eliminate blacks from the fruits of reform.¹ A different movement was under way in these years which affected Negroes — one characterized by disfranchisement, legalized segregation, and proscription. The age of reaction in race relations bred an unprecedented increase in lynchings and anti-Negro riots, North and South. From 1885 to 1915 almost 3,000 lynchings of blacks were recorded. Racial hostility was at its peak when in August, 1908, one of the most shameful of the race riots broke out in Springfield, Illinois, a city the nation associated with Abraham Lincoln. Blacks were lynched within a short distance of the Lincoln home and within two miles of the Lincoln tomb. The upheaval left Negro businesses destroyed and black families driven from their homes.²

The riot and lynchings at Springfield shocked the national conscience, perhaps more so because it occurred so close to the centennial of Lincoln's birth. Such mob violence and the general anti-black temper of American society forced blacks to seek ways of advancement either within the narrow sphere allotted them by the whites or by challenging the existing racial status quo. Significantly, many blacks writing in the Progressive Era looked to Lincoln's life in search of ways to combat Jim Crowism. Lincoln's life lent itself to symbolic use because, most black writers argued, it was dedicated to racial equality. Throughout the period Lincoln's imposing character became a silent partner for blacks in their fight against Progressive racism.

Booker T. Washington was the most prominent black leader of the day. He, more than any other Negro author, spread the message which Lincoln's life held for blacks of the Progressive Era. Born a slave in Virginia in 1856, Washington worked his way through Hampton Institute and ultimately became principal of the black vocational school at Tuskegee, Alabama. Washington's long-range goal was the "complete

and unqualified integration of the Negro into American society." But he was a realist, he recognized that the level of discrimination against blacks dictated that the race take gradual steps toward reaching its goal. Consequently, he encouraged blacks to make economic independence their first attainment.³

In simple, pleasing, Christian terms, Washington placated



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. Booker T. Washington.

white supremacists and urged blacks to accept the Jim Crow separation of the races as a temporary expedient. With the financial support of Northern philanthropists he transformed the curriculum of Southern schools for blacks. Gradually, an emphasis on vocational training on the Hampton model replaced the classics taught in the Reconstruction period. As an advisor to Presidents Roosevelt and Taft, Washington had special influence on Negro life in the South because he held strong control over patronage for blacks in the region. Even more revealing about his complex personality was Washington's work as a behind-the-scenes activist against anti-Negro legislation and black leaders such as W.E.B. DuBois and William Monroe Trotter who disagreed with his conciliatory racial policy. Washington's thought is difficult to analyze because he "gave a deceptive appearance of freely bowing to Southern demands by repeating much of the white man's propaganda."⁴

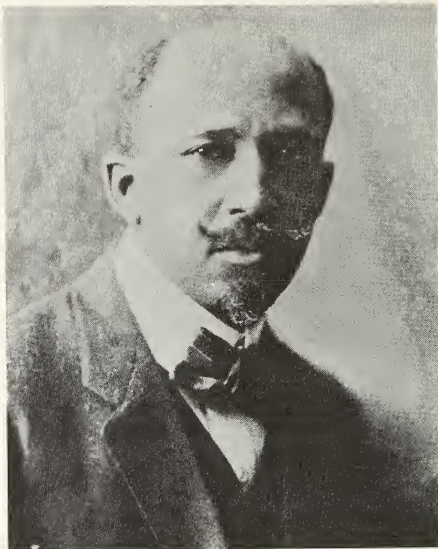
Because he was the most influential American Negro of his age, people listened when Washington spoke. And he spoke often about Abraham Lincoln. On numerous occasions the black leader explained how Lincoln's simplicity and patience, his honesty and determination, offered special messages for Negroes. Washington was keenly sensitive to the use of symbol and imagery in both the printed and spoken word. Lincoln served Washington well in his gospel of self-help and economic advancement — what some contemporary critics denounced as accommodationism.

Washington rated Lincoln a perfect model for blacks. Writing in 1877 to the editor of the *West Virginia Journal*, he cited Lincoln — "who rose from the humble log cabin to the Presidency of the greatest republic on earth" — as an example of the American success story. Like many Southern blacks, Lincoln too was once poor. But he had the courage, resolve, and desire to succeed. Throughout life Lincoln took advantage of things available to him and never despaired at seemingly insurmountable odds.⁵ Washington also employed Lincoln in his many talks and lectures. Usually in a preachy, didactic tone, he idealized the Emancipator and drove home his formula for Negro advancement.

Lincoln read the Bible, said Washington, and he urged his students at Tuskegee to "Read your Bibles every day, and you will find how healthily you will grow." Following in Lincoln's footsteps, blacks were to practice self-denial. "This is the secret of Abraham Lincoln's success in life, that great man, . . . slept on a bed of leaves without any covering in a log cabin. He practised [*sic*] this self-denial, and it gave him an element of strength which won for him the name of the 'first American.'" Honesty, another trait which Washington associated with Lincoln, was a prerequisite for blacks if they too were to advance. Recounting how scrupulous with government money Lincoln was as a postal clerk, Washington asserted that such honesty "helped him along to the presidency."⁶

Between 1896 and 1909 Washington was a frequent speaker at Lincoln Day celebrations before Northern white audiences. Over the years, although the details and examples which he used varied, his message changed little. First, he shocked the audience by informing them that his earliest recollection of Lincoln was as a slave. "Night after night, . . . on an old slave plantation in Virginia, I recall the form of my sainted mother bending over a batch of rags that enveloped my body, on a dirt floor, breathing a fervent prayer to Heaven that 'Marsa Lincoln' might succeed, and that one day she and I might be free." The Tuskegeean, however, sought not to revive sectional animosities. Instead, he emphasized how Lincoln was the saviour of Southern whites as well as blacks. When the slaves were freed, said Washington, Southern whites too were freed "to breathe the air of unfettered freedom; a freedom from dependence on others' labor to the independence of self-labor; . . . to change the Negro from an ignorant man to an intelligent man; [and] to change sympathies that were local and narrow into love and good will for all mankind."⁷

When addressing groups of Northern philanthropists, Washington asked them how they could "help the South and



Courtesy Library of Congress, from
Dictionary of American Portraits,
Dover Publications, Inc., 1967

FIGURE 2. W.E.B. DuBois.

the Negro in the completion of Lincoln's work?" To achieve "that higher emancipation" — whereby the races would live in true harmony and interdependence — required more and better schools for blacks. When he courted "the active aid and sympathy of every patriotic citizen in the North," the implication was, of course, that Northern dollars invested in Southern black vocational schools like Tuskegee would reap rich benefits for all Americans. Already, he wrote in 1896, blacks had progressed economically and educationally — in the process "proving ourselves worthy of the confidence of our great emancipator." Just as Lincoln emancipated the bondsmen, education now was serving to train blacks in Lincoln's own "habits of thrift, skill, economy and substantial character."⁸

In an age of race-baiting and lynching, Washington counseled blacks not to hate the whites. Like Lincoln, he wrote, the black race must "have the courage to refuse to hate others because it is misunderstood or abused." Virtually advising Negroes not to answer white mobs with force, Washington informed them that "We must remember that no one can degrade us except ourselves, and that if we are worthy no influence can defeat us." The *New York Times* found Washington's tone "remarkable" coming from the leader of a race "recently enslaved and still most unreasonably reviled and despitefully treated." The editor predicted that if Lincoln were still alive he would have welcomed the black leader's sound advice.⁹

In spite of his commitment to nonviolence, Washington did not allow the Springfield lynchings and race riot to pass without comment. Recognizing the tragic irony of such mob rule in Lincoln's own Springfield, he urged upon men of both races the importance of putting into daily practice the lessons of Lincoln's life. Patience and understanding, Washington informed an officer of the Lincoln Centennial Association, could not be virtues of blacks alone but had to be practiced by whites too. Washington then rebuked Springfield's white

community for their lawlessness.

... no man [he argued] who hallows the name of Lincoln will inflict injustice upon the negro because he is a negro or because he is weak. Every act of injustice, or law breaking, growing out of the presence of the negro, seeks to pull down the great temple of justice and law and order which he gave his life to make secure. . . . Just in the degree that both races, . . . exhibit the high qualities of self-control and liberality which Lincoln exhibited in his own life, we will show that in reality we love and honor his name, and both races will be lifted into a high atmosphere of serv[ic]e to each other.¹⁰

In stark contrast to Washington on almost all matters concerning their race was William Edward Burghardt DuBois. Proud of his free black origins, DuBois was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1868. Summarizing his mixed racial background, he claimed to have been born "with a flood of Negro blood, a strain of French, a bit of Dutch, but, thank God! no 'Anglo-Saxon.'" After receiving his Ph.D. in history from Harvard, DuBois went on to become one of America's great black intellectuals. He was a prolific author and a pioneer field researcher in "Negro problems." But it was as a polemicist that DuBois left his mark on Americans, black and white. Denouncing racism in every form, he was an outspoken critic of segregationist practices. In the years after 1903, he became a bitter critic of Washington, who DuBois believed was too conservative, too accommodating to white supremacists. In contrast to Washington, DuBois favored higher education and unqualified equal rights for blacks. Aristocratic, aloof, and arrogant, DuBois demanded respect for Negroes. He never wavered in his battle against what he deemed life under the malignant veil of racism.¹¹

Yet curiously, in most of his writings, DuBois differed little with Washington in his judgments of Lincoln. In 1913, for example, he referred to him as "the great man who began the emancipation of the Negro race in America and the emancipation of America itself." Several years earlier, addressing residents of Chicago's Hull House, DuBois urged his listeners to emulate Lincoln in their deeds and thoughts. Describing Lincoln as "a great man, one of the world's greatest men," the black lecturer pointed to three qualities which made him so: his unusual clearness of vision and thought, his ability to grow intellectually, and his patience in all things. DuBois cited Lincoln as the embodiment of American ideals. From humble origins, Lincoln was never impressed with false pretension. Rather, he established his own criterion for what mattered in life. And because he was contemplative, said DuBois, Lincoln's ideas matured as his responsibilities increased. He cited as evidence of this, Lincoln's position on slavery. When elected to the Presidency, Lincoln was anti-slavery — not radical — on the race issue. But, DuBois stressed, as he gave the plight of blacks additional reflection, Lincoln came to adopt abolitionist principles.¹²

In 1922, DuBois struck a markedly different chord when praising Lincoln. In doing so, DuBois expressed an undercurrent of black thought that, although voiced infrequently, was harshly critical of the Great Emancipator. Writing in *The Crisis*, the organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, DuBois described Lincoln as . . . a Southern poor white, of illegitimate birth, poorly educated and unusually ugly, awkward, ill-dressed. He liked smutty stories and was a politician down to his toes. Aristocrats . . . despised him, and indeed he had little outwardly that compelled respect. But in that curious human way he was big inside. He had reserves and depths and when habit and convention were torn away there was something left to Lincoln . . . There was something left, so that at the crisis he was big enough to be inconsistent — cruel, merciful; peace-loving, a fighter; despising Negroes and letting them fight and vote; protecting slavery and freeing slaves. He was a man — a big, inconsistent, brave man.¹³

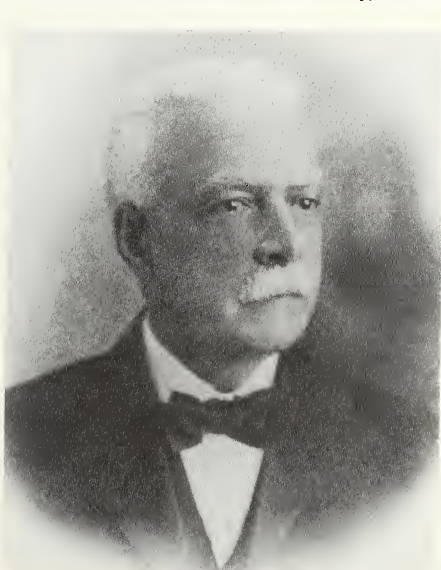
Not surprisingly, DuBois' words were anathema to Lincolnophiles. A flood of letters poured into *The Crisis* stating displeasure with such blasphemous language. But DuBois was ready for his critics. He urged all disbelievers to check the

authenticity of his statements at any library. For those sensitive to his charges of Lincoln's racism he recommended study of the Emancipator's Charleston, Illinois, speech of 1858. It was crucial for blacks, thought DuBois, not to be so uncritical of white heroes like Lincoln. Afro-Americans should search for the truth regarding all men and measures.¹⁴

DuBois admitted that it would be easier to sanctify, to "whitewash" Lincoln. But then the irony of his life would be lost. "I love him," he wrote "not because he was perfect but because he was not and yet triumphed." According to DuBois, the world contained many Abraham Lincolns — lost souls with seamy backgrounds. Lincoln's life could serve as a model for these persons: ". . . personally I revere him the more because up out of his contradictions and inconsistencies he fought his way to the pinnacles of earth and his fight was within as well as without."¹⁵

The strain of criticism of Lincoln suggested by DuBois was more fully developed by black lawyer and civil rights activist Archibald H. Grimké. Born a slave in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1849, Grimké was a nephew of the famous Grimké sisters. A graduate of Lincoln University and Harvard Law School, he served as U.S. Consul in Santo Domingo from 1894-1898. Like DuBois, Grimké was an early supporter of Washington's philosophy for Negro advancement but grew dissatisfied and became a leading force in the N.A.A.C.P. In Washington's opinion, Grimké was "a noisy, turbulent and unscrupulous" individual "more bent upon notoriety and keeping up discord than any other motive." An outspoken critic of Jim Crow laws, Grimké testified before Congressional committees on the deleterious effects of segregation and disfranchisement on blacks and whites. A distinguished black historian, he was awarded the N.A.A.C.P.'s Spingarn medal in 1919 — the highest achievement for an Afro-American citizen.¹⁶

Grimké was very critical of Lincoln, and to idolaters of the Great Emancipator he must have seemed "noisy, turbulent



Courtesy Moorland-Spingarn
Research Center, Howard
University

FIGURE 3. Archibald H. Grimké.

and unscrupulous." What troubled Grimké most about Lincoln was how far short he fell when compared with abolitionist leaders such as Charles Sumner and William Lloyd Garrison. The author of biographies of these men, Grimké chided Lincoln because "At no time before or after his election to the Presidency" was he "a friend of the slaves in the same sense" as were the two Massachusetts abolitionists. "It is the universal vogue now to sing the praises of Mr. Lincoln," wrote Grimké in 1900, "and I too will join heartily and without stint in all merited panegyric upon his greatness." But there were limits to how far he would go.¹⁷

Grimké accused Lincoln of never holding a strong commitment to abolishing slavery. Rather, he idolized the Constitution — "with all of its slave compromises" — and was dedicated to preserving the Union — "with its shameful inequality and oppression of the blacks." Grimké faulted Lincoln because abolition "was never his life purpose." For Lincoln, charged Grimké, "The right of the slave to freedom had no more practical weight . . . when set over against the peace or prosperity, or preservation of . . . [the] Union, than would have had, if such a thing was possible, the right to freedom of the imaginary inhabitants of Mars." Grimké found Lincoln especially vulnerable to criticisms of his lethargy in dealing with the problem of slaves entering Federal lines during the Civil War. "He was strangely slow and reluctant to change his policy on this question, strangely averse from abating one jot or tittle of the laws on the national statute book in favor of the masters."¹⁸

Grimké lamented that the Emancipation Proclamation was inspired by practical considerations, not humanitarian values. Lincoln was not a true friend of human liberty and the Negro race in the spirit of Sumner or Garrison, he said. Grimké urged blacks to revise their opinions of Lincoln: ". . . let us be done, once and forever, with all this literary tawdle and glamour, fiction and myth-making." He asked members of his race to challenge the "wonder-yarns which white men spin of themselves, their deeds and demigods." But his argument went beyond whether Negroes should idolize or criticize Abraham Lincoln. Grimké used his assault on the Sixteenth President as a forum from which to incite Progressive Era blacks to make their own judgments; to assert their own feelings and opinions.

It seems to me [wrote Grimké] that it is high time for colored Americans to look at Abraham Lincoln from their own standpoint, instead of from that of their white fellow-citizens. We have surely a point of view equally with them for the study of this great man's public life, wherein it touched and influenced our history. Then why are we invariably found in their place on this subject, as on kindred ones, and not in our own? Are we never to find ourselves and our real thought on men and things . . . for fear of giving offence? Are we to be forever a trite echo, an insignificant "me too" to the white race in America on all sorts of questions . . . ? Is it due to some congenital race weakness, or to environment, to the slave blood which is still abundant in our veins, that we rate instinctively and unconsciously whatever appertains to them as better than the corresponding thing which appertains to ourselves . . . ? Are we never to acquire a sense of proportion and independence of judgment, but must go on with our brains befuddled with the white man's prodigiously magnified opinion of himself and achievements? . . . For if we are ever to occupy a position in America other than that of mere dependents and servile imitators of the whites, we must emancipate ourselves from this species of slavery. . . . With whom then can we more appropriately begin this work of intellectual emancipation than with Abraham Lincoln, the emancipator?¹⁹

Years before the turn of the century black Americans looked to Abraham Lincoln for inspiration and meaning in life. He was a symbol of hope for the freedmen; his name was a watchword for victory and freedom. Lincoln's image came to have a special significance for blacks in the Progressive Era — the

nadir in the history of race relations in America. Racial equality in these years was at best a pipe dream. Lynchings, mob action, disfranchisement — humiliations of all kinds — characterized the reality of black life. It was to Lincoln that blacks again turned in their search for guidance, for an explanation of their proscribed world. The conflicting ideologies of black leaders like Washington, DuBois, and Grimké were mirrored in their interpretations of Lincoln. Washington, ever complex in motive and method, represented the attitudes of most Negro Americans: Lincoln was a Christ-like figure. Surprisingly, DuBois was more favorable in his judgments of Lincoln than might be suspected. Still, he was quick to note Lincoln's inconsistencies, especially his view of colonization as the best method of disposing of the "problem" of the American Negro. Grimké used his criticisms of Lincoln to communicate a broad message to his race: blacks must question and probe. Filiofetism of white leaders would no longer serve the best interests of blacks. For Washington, DuBois, and Grimké, Lincoln's life was filled with lessons — lessons in love, humanity, and realism.

Notes

¹Woodward, "Progressivism — For Whites Only," *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge, 1967; orig. pub., 1951), pp. 369-395.

²William English Walling, "The Race War in the North," *The Independent*, LXV (September 3, 1908), 529-534; James L. Crouthamel, "The Springfield Race Riot of 1908," *Journal of Negro History*, XLV (July, 1960), 164-181.

³Samuel R. Spencer, *Booker T. Washington and the Negro's Place in American Life* (Boston, 1955), p. 195.

⁴Claude H. Nolen, *The Negro's Image in the South* (Lexington, 1968), p. 146.

⁵Louis R. Harlan, ed., *The Booker T. Washington Papers* (5 vols.; Urbana, 1972-1976), II, 73.

⁶*Ibid.*, III, 93, 130-131; IV, 514.

⁷Washington, *Address of Booker T. Washington Principal of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Before the Union League Club, Brooklyn, February 12, 1896* [n.p., 1896], pp. 1, 2.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 3, 8; Washington, *An Address By Booker T. Washington, Prin., Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama* [n.p., 1898], p. 3; *Address of Booker T. Washington Principal . . . February 12, 1896*, pp. 7, 8.

⁹Washington, "Lincoln and the Black Man," *The Congressionalist and Christian World*, February 6, 1909, p. 176; *New York Times*, February 13, 1909.

¹⁰Letter to James R.B. Van Cleave, February 9, 1909, in *Springfield (Ill.) News*, February 13, 1909.

¹¹DuBois, *Darkwater: Voices From Within the Veil* (New York, 1969; orig. pub., 1920), p. 9.

¹²DuBois, "Resolutions at Cooper Union on Lincoln's Birthday," *The Crisis*, V (April, 1913), 292; "Abraham Lincoln," *The Voice*, IV (June, 1907), 242, 243.

¹³DuBois in *The Crisis*, XXIV (July, 1922), 103.

¹⁴DuBois, "Again, Lincoln," *The Crisis*, XXIV (September, 1922), 199-201.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 199, 200.

¹⁶Grimké, "Why Disfranchisement is Bad," *Atlantic Monthly*, XCIV (July, 1904), 72-81; Washington quoted in August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915* (Ann Arbor, 1971; orig. pub., 1963), p. 243; Rayford W. Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro* (London, 1970; orig. pub., 1954), pp. 364-367.

¹⁷Grimké, "Charles Sumner," *The American Negro Academy Occasional Papers No. 14* (Washington, 1911), p. 15; "Abraham Lincoln," *Howard's American Magazine*, IV (March, 1900), 353.

¹⁸Grimké, "Abraham Lincoln," pp. 354, 355.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 355, 358, 352-353.

Fair-skinned family members fight Louisiana law labeling them black

A family of fair-haired, light-skinned sisters and brothers go to court in New Orleans Monday to challenge a Louisiana law that their attorney said essentially would classify every American as black. The law, approved by the Louisiana Legislature in 1970, states people are black if it can be shown they have at least 1/32nd "Negro blood." Louisiana is the only state with such a classification. Attorneys for both the family and the state want the case to reach the Louisiana Supreme Court, which they hope will declare the law unconstitutional. Attorney Brian Begue said he

plans to introduce evidence in state civil court to show the average American is 5 percent black. The plaintiffs are two sisters whose birth certificates classify them as black. Their children, nieces and nephews are registered as Caucasian. The women and their brothers, unnamed in the suit to protect their identity, want the law thrown out and their birth certificates changed to classify them as Caucasian. Their situation dates to the 1700s, when a white planter came to Louisiana from Mobile, Ala. and fathered four children by one of his wife's black slaves. After his wife's death, the planter freed the family. The slave was the last full-blooded black in the family. Begue claimed, and her 20th century descendants no longer should be classified as black.

LIVING FOR KIDS

D The Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette
Tuesday, September 18, 1990

Tuskegee head stressed education

By **ARKADY LEOKUM**

Universal Press Syndicate

Booker Taliaferro Washington, who lived from 1856 to 1915, was the best-known black leader and educator in the United States in the years after the Civil War.

He was born before the war as a slave on a Virginia plantation. After the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Lincoln in 1863 freeing the slaves, Booker's mother moved with her children to Malden, W. Va. There Booker entered a school for black children. To help support the family, he worked mornings in salt furnaces and coal mines. He had almost no chance to go to school, but he studied whenever he could. He wanted an education more than anything.

In 1872, he heard about Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia. Hampton had been started by Samuel C. Armstrong, a white man who wanted to help blacks get an education and learn to earn their own living.

Washington walked the 500 miles to Hampton. He was 17. He studied there for three years. After teaching elsewhere for two years, he returned to Hampton Institute as a teacher. He



Washington

also started a night school for students who worked during the day. Armstrong suggested Washington as organizer of a new industrial and teacher-training school for blacks in Tuskegee, Ala.

The vocational school opened in 1881 in an old church with only 30 pupils. Then Washington bought an old farm, and the students learned to run it. The students also learned skilled trades, and used their knowledge to help other people improve their living conditions.

For years he traveled widely, sometimes by mule and buggy, to raise funds for the school. He was a stirring orator and made many speeches for the school.

He traveled all over the United States and Europe. His best-known books are "Up From Slavery," about his own life, and "The Man Farthest Down."

In the late 1800s, relations between blacks and whites were getting worse.

Schools, jobs and housing open to whites were not open to blacks.

In one of his most famous speeches, at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta on Sept. 18, 1895, Washington urged blacks to work for advances in education and employment instead of directly for equality. He favored cooperation between blacks and whites.

Washington was criticized by some blacks, especially historian W.E.B. Du Bois, because of his views. Du Bois believed blacks should not limit themselves to skilled trades and vocational training, but should be able to go to college. Du Bois believed blacks should actively work for equality.

Du Bois and others later founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and other groups to seek equal rights for blacks.

During Washington's lifetime, his school, later called the Tuskegee Institute, grew until its campus consisted of more than 100 buildings, and its student body numbered almost 1,600.

The school is now called Tuskegee University. It has more than 3,300 students, and its students can earn advanced degrees.

